



REASON & REVELATION

A Monthly Journal of Christian Evidences

NOVEMBER 2020 • VOL. 40 • NO. 11

Does the **Garden of Eden** Still **Exist?**

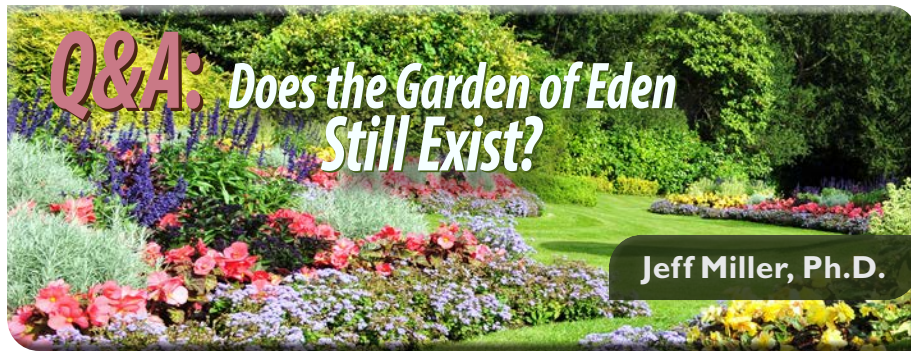
In the News:
Abiogenesis

Evidence of
Behemoth's
Identity

Jesus' **Fast**
and **BIBLE**
Reliability



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DISCOVERY



THE Bible is inspired,¹ has not been corrupted,² and Genesis reports historical events that actually occurred in the past.³ We know, therefore, that the Garden of Eden existed on planet Earth at some point. Many Bible believers, therefore, are naturally excited at the prospect of tracking down its location. Its discovery would further verify the Bible's testimony, captivate the minds of virtually every person on Earth, and maybe even provide secrets to eternal physical life (assuming the cherubim and the flaming sword are not still guarding the Tree of Life—Genesis 3:24). That said, Bible believers should take care not to go beyond the evidence and draw “outlandish” conclusions without sufficient evidence to back their claims, or they will most certainly do damage to the cause instead of helping it. Believing that Eden has been found (or even still exists today) are prime examples of this danger. What does the **evidence** say? Does the Garden of Eden still exist?

Nobody knows, so caution is in order. But there are some facts that can help us arrive at a reasonable conclusion:

- First, keep in mind that it would be easy to subconsciously assume that Genesis 2, where Eden is described, was being written “real time”—as though the writer lived alongside Adam and Eve in the Garden. In reality, however, Genesis was written by Moses roughly 2,500 years later⁴—long after the Flood—to an

audience living in roughly 1,500 B.C.

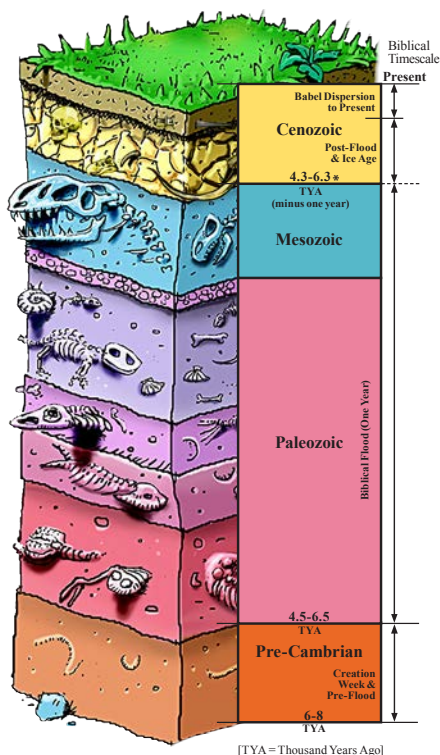
- The grammar of Genesis 2 (in English translations) implies that at the time Moses wrote the book, several topographical markers were still available that allowed his audience to know the general vicinity of Eden. The present tense is used in English translations throughout the chapter (vss. 11,12,13,14), indicating that various physical markers existed in Moses' time. However, unlike English, Hebrew does not actually have tense, properly speaking. Virtually all modern English translations **assume** Moses intended to communicate the present tense, but the Hebrew does not necessarily demand it. Moses could have been communicating past tense, implying that the rivers did not exist in his day anymore, nor the valuable resources mentioned in conjunction with the rivers. The implication would be that some of the locations/rivers mentioned by Moses may have been names passed down through the centuries, and Moses could have simply been clarifying where those legendary markers were relative to Eden. However, it would seem odd for Moses (God) to spend so much time highlighting to his audience specific, now non-existent markers and the locations of precious resources relative to those markers. No doubt, that rationale helps to explain why modern English translations assume the present tense throughout the text. Implication:

the topographical markers to which Moses referred (i.e., the rivers and lands) **possibly** existed in 1,500 B.C., though no doubt much different in nature compared to their characteristics at Creation (and compared to their current characteristics). Note, however, that Eden itself is not said in the text to have still existed at Moses' time, nor is the single river which became four riverheads. Instead, the four rivers themselves are described (by English translators) as existing at the time of Moses, though apparently no longer connected to one another in the way described by Moses (see below).

- The description of Eden's location is given in Genesis 2:8-14. Though scholars have gone to great lengths attempting to nail down the identities of the lands of Havilah and Cush, they have been unable to do so conclusively, and the same is true concerning the identification of the four rivers listed by Moses: Pishon, Gihon, Hiddekel, and the Euphrates. While there are Tigris (Hiddekel) and Euphrates rivers today, it is uncertain if those are the rivers to which Moses was referring in Genesis 2. While he does mention the Euphrates River later in the Pentateuch (Genesis 15:18; Deuteronomy 1:7; 11:24), which is possibly the modern-day Euphrates River, it is not clear if the Euphrates of the pre-Flood world was the same river. As is often the case today, well-known names from previous places and times are often used elsewhere (e.g., the many names of locations in England which were used by Europeans upon moving to “New” England). To add further difficulty, Creation geologists highlight that there is no place on the Earth today where a river parts and becomes four riverheads (Genesis 2:10), implying that the surface of the Earth has drastically changed since Creation,

as would be expected due to the effects of the Flood. Again, if the English translators are correct, the four rivers apparently still existed at the time of Moses, even if they do not still exist today.

- Creation geologists are nearly unanimous in their understanding of which rock layers in the geologic column represent the beginning of the Flood: the Cambrian strata at the base of the Paleozoic rock layers. Just below the Cambrian strata is an erosion surface—a worldwide geologic unconformity (the Great Unconformity) representing the commencement of the Flood. Some of the rock layers that existed (i.e., pre-Flood rock layers) prior to the erosional event (the Flood) are missing. During the Flood, enormous amounts of sediment were eroded from the pre-Flood Earth's surface and sediment from the continents and ocean were piled on the continents, forming the bulk of the fossil record and much of the geologic column, beginning with the Cambrian strata. The Flood strata continue upward through



*Creation scientists have not settled on the exact layer that represents the end of the Flood. Some argue that the Flood extended into some of the Cenozoic layers.

the Paleozoic and Mesozoic rock strata, and end at either the top of those rock layers or continue a certain distance into the Cenozoic strata. Much of the Cenozoic sediment was laid down after the Flood or at the very end of it. **Translation:** the pre-Flood Earth surface was apparently wiped clean and, in some cases, buried under **several miles** of sediment. Many commentators guess that Eden is located in modern day Armenia or Iraq, but they do so, apparently, without understanding how drastic the Flood's geologic impact would have been across the entire surface of the Earth. The area where Eden is thought by many commentators to have been located is covered with immense amounts of Flood sediment. That means that Eden, if (1) it was not first completely eroded away by the Flood (which is likely), or (2) pushed down into the mantle during the Flood (there is a subduction zone along the north/northeast side of the Arabian plate in the area where Eden is thought to have been), is now covered with roughly three to five miles of mud/sediment deposited during and after the Flood.

- With that knowledge in mind, it is difficult to imagine how the same four rivers of the pre-Flood world could have still existed after the Flood.⁵ Even if they did, however, river channels migrate over time as they erode the surface of the Earth and are affected by flooding and new obstacles. The Nile River, for example, is known to have migrated laterally, back and forth, over time, meandering to places that are now over three miles away from where it now migrates.⁶ Thus, even if the four rivers to which Moses referred could be specifically pinpointed, it is highly unlikely that they are in the same places that they were 3,500 years ago.

Bottom line: while unlikely, the four rivers that branched off of the river leaving Eden **might** have still existed in Moses' day (after the Flood), but they are not the same today as they were during Moses' day 3,500 years ago, much less after Creation week. The continued existence of Eden itself is highly doubtful, and its location—if still in existence—would be virtually impossible to find.

ENDNOTES

¹ Eric Lyons and Kyle Butt (2015), "3 Good Reasons to Believe the Bible is from God," *Reason & Revelation*, 35[1]:2-11.

² to Believe the Bible Has Not Been Corrupted," *Reason & Revelation*, 35[8]:86-92.

³ or History?" *Reason & Revelation*, 40[5]:50-57.

⁴ Authorship of the Pentateuch—Tried and True," *Reason & Revelation*, 23[1]:1-7.

⁵ NIV translates Genesis 2:6 as "streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground." While the term "streams" (apparently relying on a Greek translation, verified by Akkadian and Sumerian cognates, according to Hebrew scholar Justin Rogers) is typically translated as "mist" in other translations, Hebrew scholars are uncertain about the real meaning of the word. Streams coming up from the Earth would possibly imply the existence of an underground aquifer that supplied the water for the river that watered Eden (Genesis 2:10), which separated into the four mentioned rivers. If the underground aquifer was not destroyed by the Flood (which is unlikely), it may be possible that after the Flood its waters would again reach the surface and result in the formation of other streams/rivers. It is notable that the Ras El Ain karstic springs feed the Khabour river which, today, is one of the main tributaries of the Euphrates River [Aysegul Kibaroglu (2014), "Euphrates-Tigris River Basin Report," HARC, https://harcresearch.org/sites/default/files/Project_Documents/Reports1-EuphratesTigris.pdf, pp. 2-4].

⁶ Angus Graham (2007), "Monuments on a Migrating Nile," *Journal of Archaeological Science*, 34[7]:1011-1015, July.



ACCORDING to the evidence, in nature, life **only** comes from life,¹ making belief in naturalism and atheism (which require abiogenesis—life from non-life) a **blind** faith.² In fact, naturalism is a self-contradictory belief, since a naturalist must believe in such **unnatural** phenomena.³ And yet, such rational truths are regularly neglected by today's naturalist-dominated scientific community. Ironically, some acknowledge the total failure of naturalism to provide a reasonable explanation for how life came from non-life and proceed to (unconsciously) make a case against it that is as good as the case creationists have long made against abiogenesis. Hostile witness testimony is powerful evidence, since hostile witnesses are less likely to acknowledge the claims made by those they dislike or with whom they disagree. A good example of hostile witness testimony that supports creationist arguments about abiogenesis is a recent article in *New Scientist* by Michael Marshall entitled “Life’s Big Bang.”⁴ Here are some telling quotes from the article that we could not have said better.

ON THE LONG-STANDING FAILURE OF NATURALISTS TO EXPLAIN THE ORIGIN OF LIFE

- “Many ideas have been proposed to explain how it began. Most are based on the assumption that cells are too complex to have formed all at once, so life must have started with just one component that survived and somehow created the others around it. **When put into practice in the lab, however, these ideas don’t produce anything particularly lifelike.** It is, some researchers are starting to realise,⁵ like trying to build a car by making a chassis and hoping wheels and an engine will spontaneously appear. The alternative—that life emerged fully formed—**seems even more unlikely.**”
- “An early idea put proteins in the driving seat. In the 1950s, biochemist Sidney Fox discovered that heating amino acids made them link up into chains.... However, the proteinoids **never got much further.** Some researchers still hunt for lifelike behaviour in simple proteins, but the idea that proteins started life on their own **has now been largely rejected.**”
- “More recently, much research has focused on an idea called the RNA

world.... However, biochemists have spent decades struggling to get RNA to self-assemble or copy itself in the lab, and **now concede that it needs a lot of help to do either.**”

- “Perhaps, then, membranes came first. David Deamer at the University of California, Santa Cruz, has championed this option. In the 1970s, his team discovered that lipids found in cell membranes could be made when two simple chemicals, cyanamide and glycerol, were mixed with water and heated to 65°C.... **Nevertheless, he now accepts that this isn’t enough, because lipids can’t carry genes or form enzymes.**”
- “A handful of scientists argue that life didn’t begin on Earth, but elsewhere in the universe, and that it was carried here on meteoroids and other space bodies.... The idea is called ‘panspermia’. **Aside from the fact that this simply relocates the problem of how life got going, we also haven’t found evidence of life elsewhere.** If panspermia were true, bacteria would be raining down on Earth from space, and neighbouring worlds like the moon would be scattered with their remains. **But there is no evidence of incoming bacteria, and moon rocks are sterile.** Furthermore, space is hostile to life. In experiments where bacteria were placed outside the International Space Station, even exposures of a year took a heavy toll. This leaves a window for life to travel within the solar system, but it is a narrow one: the trip from Mars to Earth would take many months at least. **Travel from other stars would take millennia, so looks impossible.**”

Translation: the arguments that have long been used in support of abiogenesis, and which continue to

be promoted in textbooks, are all acknowledged now to be **wrong** based on the **physical evidence**.

NATURALISTS: "THE ORIGIN OF LIFE IS APPARENTLY MORE COMPLICATED THAN WE THOUGHT."

- "The problem with understanding the origin of life is that we don't know what the first life was like. The oldest accepted fossils are 3.5 billion years old,⁶ but they don't help much. They are found in ancient rock formations in Western Australia known as stromatolites and are single-celled microorganisms like modern bacteria. **These are relatively complex: even the simplest modern bacteria have more than 100 genes.** The first organisms must have been **simpler**. Viruses have fewer genes, but can reproduce only by infecting cells and taking them over, so can't have come first."
- "Life can be boiled down to three core systems. First, it has structural integrity: that means each cell has an outer membrane holding it together. Second, life has metabolism, a set of chemical reactions that obtain energy from its surroundings. Finally, life can reproduce using genes, which contain instructions for building cells and are passed on to offspring.... Life's three core processes are **inter-twined**. Genes carry instructions for making proteins, which means proteins only exist because of genes. But proteins are also essential for maintaining and copying genes, so genes only exist because of proteins. And proteins—made by genes—are crucial for constructing the lipids for membranes. Any hypothesis explaining life's origin must take account of this. Yet, if we suppose that genes, metabolism and membranes were unlikely to have arisen

simultaneously, that means one of them must have come first and 'invented' the others."

Translation: life is (in the words of intelligent design advocates) "irreducibly complex." All necessary components for life had to be in place from the beginning, or life could not exist, making naturalistic theories for the origin of life implausible, irrational, and fideistic.

"WELL, IF SIMPLE EXPLANATIONS DON'T WORK..."

What is the naturalists' response to the above crushing admissions? Even though the only other "naturalistic" option "seems even more unlikely" according to Marshall, naturalists are essentially conceding the irreducible complexity of life, but are continuing to deny the decisive, rational evidence of a Designer that is demanded by their laboratory findings. If "simple explanations of how life got started don't add up," Marshall says, the explanations (contrary to common

sense) must be complex instead. "The shortcomings of these simple models of life's origin have led Deamer and others to explore the seemingly **less plausible alternative** that all three systems emerged together in a highly simplified form": the "everything-first idea" for the origin of life. Really?

Proving the legitimacy of that "less plausible alternative," Marshall explains, has been the pursuit of various laboratories over the last several years. While acknowledging the shortcomings of their results as well (e.g., "pieces of the puzzle are still missing," and "It remains to be seen whether [they—JM]...can work"), Marshall admits that, nevertheless, they "are our best model yet.... Perhaps the most persuasive argument [for complexity—JM] is that the simpler ideas don't work." But assuming the first life was more complex makes abiogenesis even less plausible, as he admitted. How is that a good solution to the problem? Marshall con-

con't. on p. 128

Reason & Revelation is published monthly by Apologetics Press, Inc. Periodicals postage paid at Montgomery, AL. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to **Reason & Revelation**, 230 Landmark Dr., Montgomery, AL 36117; **ISSN:**[1542-0922] **USPS#** 023415.

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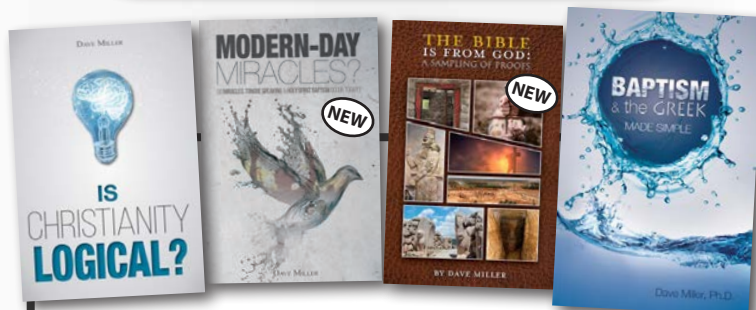
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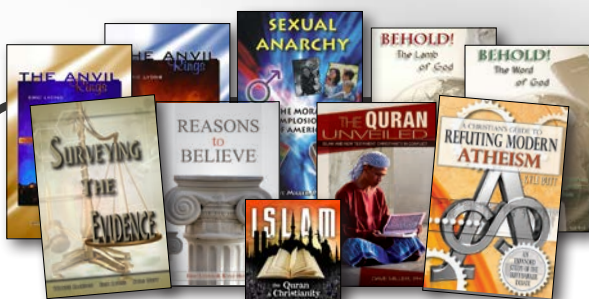
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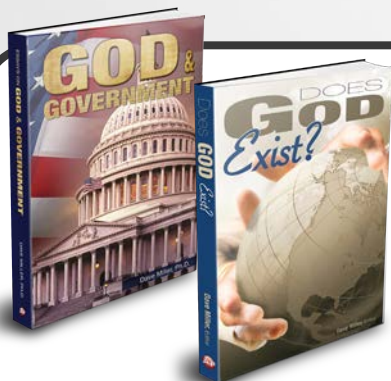


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tinues: “As is the case with many things in life, the beginning was probably **more complicated than we had thought.**” (Wait, haven’t creationists been saying that all along?) Translation: since we can’t get a simple brick to make itself in order to start building a house (we’ve tried), the solution must be that the whole house, comprised of intricate design, complexity, and bricks was accidentally (and magically) manufactured all at once... without a manufacturer. Better option: Hebrews 3:4—there was a manufacturer for the house: “For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God.”

ENDNOTES

¹ Biogenesis [Part I],” *Reason & Revelation*, 32[1]:2-11, <http://apologeticspress.org/apPubPage.aspx?pub=1&issue=1018>; see also, Jeff Miller (2017), *Science vs. Evolution* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press), second edition, pp. 61-110.

² ralist, You Creationists Have a Blind Faith,” *Reason & Revelation*, 33[7]:76-83, <http://apologeticspress.org/apPubPage.aspx?pub=1&issue=1125&article=2164>.

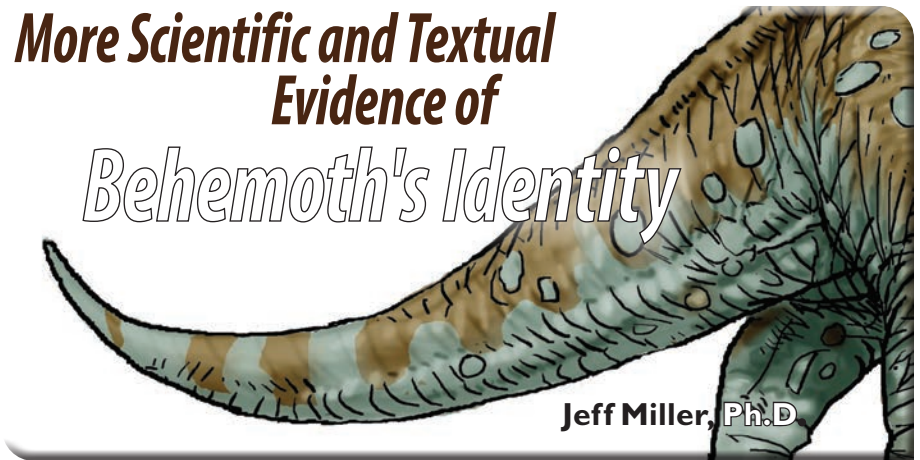
³ Contradictory,” Apologetics Press, <https://apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?article=5468>.

⁴ Bang,” *New Scientist*, 247[3294]:34-38. Emphasis is added throughout the following quotes.

⁵ *New Scientist* is published in the U.K., explaining the variant spelling of many words throughout the following quotes.

⁶ dence supports a young Earth, on the order of thousands, not billions, of years. See Jeff Miller (2019), “21 Reasons to Believe the Earth is Young,” *Reason & Revelation*, 39[1]:2-11.

More Scientific and Textual Evidence of Behemoth's Identity



JOB 40 describes a mighty creature that was just as real as Job (vs. 15)—it was not a non-existent, figurative animal. Many scholars, mystified by what Behemoth was, and in many cases writing before many of the dinosaurs had even been discovered in the mid-to-late 1800s, or trained to believe dinosaurs and humans did not co-exist because of evolutionary presuppositions, quickly assume the Behemoth must have been a creature living today, like a hippopotamus or elephant. As we have shown elsewhere, however, the biblical description of Behemoth does not match the hippo or elephant. For example, Behemoth was “chief of the ways of God” (vs. 19, ASV)¹ and, unlike hippos or elephants, had a tail² comparable to a cedar tree (vs. 17),³ a tree known in the Bible for its size and strength. Other clues from the text, however, also preclude the hippo or elephant from being identified as Behemoth.

For example, the text says that Behemoth’s strength was in its hips or loins (vs. 16). The elephant’s strength, however, is in its head (namely, its trunk) and neck. It carries roughly 60% of its weight on its front legs, not hind legs.⁴ Interestingly, studies have been conducted that compared the weight distributions of elephants

with sauropod dinosaurs.⁵ Scientists have discovered that sauropods, contrary to elephants, had the opposite weight distribution, with sauropods’ center of mass being closer to the rear and having much larger hind legs compared to their forelegs.⁶ Did God not know where the strength of Behemoth was actually located? Or is it possible that Behemoth was not an elephant?

According to the text, Behemoth’s “bones are like **beams** of bronze, his ribs like bars of iron” (Job 40:18). Concerning the term translated “beams,” commentator Albert Barnes explains that, while some translate the term as “tubes,” “the more common meaning of the word is ‘strong, mighty,’ and there is no impropriety in retaining that sense here; and then the meaning would be, that his bones were so firm that they seemed to be made of **solid metal.**”⁷ The bones of hippos have a marrow cavity that makes up “55% of the total thickness” of its femurs—less than most mammals—but still helping “the animal to walk on the bottom of rivers.”⁸ Elephant bones have cavities with “spongy bone” in them.⁹ Sauropod dinosaurs, however, were unique. Many had ribs, vertebrae, and limb bones that were not hollowed-out like most animals, but **solid bone.**¹⁰

Hippos and elephants simply do not fit the description as given in the text. Since we can know that the Earth is young,¹¹ that dinosaurs have existed in the past according to the fossil record, that God would have created dinosaurs alongside man on Day 6 of Creation week (Genesis 1:24-28), that dinosaurs survived the Flood,¹² and that post-Flood humans saw them centuries after the Flood,¹³ why would scholars so vehemently reject the possibility that Job, who likely lived relatively soon after the Flood, was shown dinosaurs by God? Which creature best fits the text?

I have always scratched my head in bewilderment at the mental gymnastics many scholars will engage in to (1) deny the striking similarities that Behemoth had to sauropod dinosaurs, and (2) force the hippo or elephant into the text where they simply do not fit (engaging in eisegesis, rather than exegesis). Why not just let the evidence speak for itself?

ENDNOTES

- 1 Dave Miller (2008), "The First of the Ways of God," *R&R Resources*, 7[3]:9-R, http://apologeticspress.org/pub_rar/28_3/0803.pdf.
- 2 Note that if Job lived towards the end of the Ice Age, which is probable, elephants as we know them may not have yet been on the scene. The elephant kind was apparently represented by woolly mammoths and mastodons at the time, which have a similar tail length and character as modern elephants (though with more hair).
- 3 Dave Miller (2011), "Behemoth: A Tail Like a Cedar?" *Reason & Revelation*, 31[12]:122-131, http://apologeticspress.org/pub_rar/31_12/1112.pdf.
- 4 Donald M. Henderson (2006), "Burly Gaits: Centers of Mass, Stability, and the Trackways of Sauropod Dinosaurs," *Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*, 26[4]:912, December;

- "Jobaria and the Elephant" (2020), Paul Sereno: Paleontologist, https://paulsereno.uchicago.edu/discoveries/jobaria_tiguidensis/jobaria_and_the_elephant/.
- 5 The large dinosaurs with the generally long necks, long tails, and small heads.
- 6 Henderson; "Jobaria...."
- 7 Albert Barnes (2010), *Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament*, electronic database, Wordsearch Corp, emp. added.
- 8 J.G.M. Thewissen, Lisa Noelle Cooper, John C. George, and Sunil Bajpai (2009), "From Land to Water: the Origin of Whales, Dolphins, and Porpoises," *Evolution: Education and Outreach*, 2:272-288, <https://evolution-outreach.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1007/s12052-009-0135-2>.
- 9 "Elephant" (2002), *International Wildlife Encyclopedia*, Volume 6: DUG-FLO, third edition, p. 767.
- 10 "Dinosaur: Classification" (2020), *Encyclopaedia Britannica* on-line, Accessed September 23, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/animal/dinosaur/Classification>; Patricia Barnes-Svarney and Thomas E. Svarney (2010), *The Handy Dinosaur Answer Book* (Canton, MI: Visible Ink Press), second edition, p. 64; "Sauropods" (n.d.), On-line Biology Library, Orange County Community College, <http://bio.sunyorange.edu/updated2/pl%20new/36%20Sauropods.htm>; Andreas Christian,

Wolf-Dieter Heinrich, and Werner Golder (1999), "Posture and Mechanics of the Forelimbs of *Brachiosaurus brancai* (Dinosauria: Sauropoda)," *Mitt. Mus. Nat.kd. Berl., Geowiss. Reihe*, volume 2, <https://fr.copernicus.org/articles/2/63/1999/fr-2-63-1999.pdf>, p. 68; Samuel W. Williston (1898), *The University Geological Survey of Kansas* (Topeka: J.S. Parks, State Printer), volume 4: Paleontology, Part 1: Upper Cretaceous, p. 69; "Titanosauria" (2020), *Wikipedia*, Accessed September 23, 2020, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Titanosauria>; Chris McGowan (2011), *Dinosaur Discovery* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers), p. 6; Mark Hallett and Mathew J. Wedel (2016), *The Sauropod Dinosaurs: Life in the Age of Giants* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press), p. 72.

- 11 Jeff Miller (2019), "21 Reasons to Believe the Earth is Young," *Reason & Revelation*, 39[1]:2-11, <http://apologeticspress.org/apPubPage.aspx?pub=1&issue=1287>.
- 12 Jeff Miller (2019), "Was the Ark Large Enough for ALL of the Animals?," *Reason & Revelation*, 39[7]:82-83, <http://apologeticspress.org/apPubPage.aspx?pub=1&issue=1299&article=2920>.
- 13 Eric Lyons and Kyle Butt (2008), *The Dinosaur Delusion* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press).

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Does Jesus' Fast Prove the Bible to Be Unreliable?

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IN Matthew chapter four, we read about Jesus' temptation by Satan in the wilderness. The text says that Jesus "fasted forty days and forty nights." How could Jesus possibly live that long without eating? Does the length of Jesus' fast cast doubt on the reliability of the Bible?

As is always the case, a deeper study of this allegation vindicates Scripture. First keep in mind, while one might assume that biblical fasting always means to abstain from food and drink, a study of examples of fasting in Scripture reveals that there are various types of fasting¹:

- The "Absolute Fast," where an individual abstains from both food and water. While this kind of fast is mentioned several times in Scripture (e.g., Jonah 3:7; Zechariah 7:5-6; Luke 5:33; Acts 9:9), it was carried out over relatively short periods of time—presumably less than three days (Esther 4:16; Ezra 10:6-10). In rare cases in Scripture, an absolute fast lasted for longer periods of time, wherein the individual

could only have survived with supernatural assistance (Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:9; 1 Kings 19:1-8). However, in those cases, assistance from God is reasonably implied by the text.

- The "Partial Fast," where one's diet is restricted, rather than complete abstinence occurring (Daniel 1:8,12; 10:3).
- The "Normal Fast," where an individual abstains only from solid food, but not water, for a period of time (2 Samuel 12:16-20; Joel 1:14-16). [Note: the Hebrew term for fast (*tsuwm*) literally means "to abstain from food."²]

In what form of fasting did Jesus engage? It is possible that Jesus was supernaturally sustained throughout His fast. In his comments on Matthew 4:2, J.W. McGarvey argued that Jesus' temptation fast was an example of a supernatural fast, arguing that the phrase, "*afterward* He was hungry" "implies that his appetite was miraculously suspended during the forty days."³ In other words, He was not hungry during the 40

days and nights, but was hungry "*afterward*."⁴ Since the Spirit is mentioned as being involved in the temptation period (Matthew 4:1; Luke 4:1), it is not unreasonable to suppose miraculous activity was involved,⁵ for the same reason that we would suppose Moses was supernaturally sustained by God on Mount Sinai in Exodus 34:28 for "forty days and forty nights" without his eating or drinking.⁶ While the suggestion that a miracle saved Jesus would be unpalatable to non-Bible believers, Scripture is saturated with examples of supernatural activity (and, indeed, science demands that supernatural activity has happened many times in the past⁷).⁸ Since Scripture has divine characteristics that prove it to be from God (the Bible itself is an example of a miracle),⁹ when it records miraculous occurrences, we know that they happened.

It is probable that Jesus' fast was a "Normal Fast."¹⁰ If that is true, is it reasonable to suppose that Jesus could have survived for 40 days without food?¹¹ While a person could only survive without water for a week in "comfortable surroundings,"¹² documented cases of people surviving for 40 days (and longer) with water but no food exist,¹³ with body weight (especially fat content), genetic makeup, gender, and age affecting survival times.¹⁴ Dr. Peter Janiszewski wrote: "Generally, it appears as though humans can survive without any food for **30-40 days**, as long as they are properly hydrated. Severe symptoms of starvation begin around 35-40 days,

and as highlighted by the hunger strikers of the Maze Prison in Belfast in the 1980s, death can occur at around 45-61 days.¹⁵ One of the most remarkable fasts was undertaken by Terence MacSwiney. In a hunger strike, MacSwiney went more than two months without food, dying of starvation after 74 days.¹⁶

How is that possible for the human body to go so long without food? One reason is that the body was designed with the ability to adjust its metabolism when energy is scarce.¹⁷ After your body converts its food into glucose and its glucose supply is exhausted (within 24 hours), your body begins accessing energy in different ways. First the liver is stimulated to make more glucose. After two-to-three days, fat tissues become the main energy source, and finally, your body enters into ketosis, where fatty acids are used by the liver to form ketones which fuel the brain. After fatty acids in the body have been depleted, the body switches to muscle protein as its main energy source, until the muscles in the body (including the heart) have been depleted.¹⁸ Again, the length of time that this process takes hinges on many factors. It is ironic that the most up-to-date research puts the general limit of fasts at 30-40 days. Thus, not only is there nothing about the 40-day fast of Christ that calls into question the Bible's accuracy, but it actually coincides perfectly with modern research, adding yet another piece of evidence of the Bible's truthfulness.

ENDNOTES

1 nition for 'Fasting' Fausset's Bible Dictionary," bible-history.com, <https://www.bible-history.com/faussets/f/fasting/>; "Fast" (1956), *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. James Orr (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), 2:1099.

2 (1906), *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson), p. 847; Although, the term "food" sometimes includes drink.

3 19:1-8 as other similar examples [J.W. McGarvey (2007), *A Commentary on Matthew and Mark*, Wordsearch Corp].

4 and David Brown (2012), *Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary*, Wordsearch Corp, Matthew 4:2.

5 tance with Jesus' hunger would lessen the significance of Jesus' fast and possibly even the Devil's first temptation.

6 Barnes cites Luke 4:2 and notes that Jesus **completely** abstained from eating food, whether solid food or solid and liquid food [Albert Barnes (2014), *Barnes' Notes on the New Testament*, Wordsearch Bible, Matthew 4:2].

7 *Science vs. Evolution* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press), second edition.

8 of miraculous activity, Scripture teaches that such miraculous activity no longer occurs today [Dave Miller (2020), *Modern-Day Miracles? Do Miracles, Tongue Speaking, & Holy Spirit Baptism Occur Today?* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press), <https://store.apologeticspress.org/products/modern-day-miracles>].

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10 "What Exactly Is Fasting All About?" BibleStudyTools.com, January 11, <https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/what-exactly-is-fasting-all-about.html>.

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18 (2018), "The Circulating Metabolome of Human Starvation," *JCI Insight*, 3[16]:e121434, August 23.



NOTE FROM

The Editor



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What would you do if your child or grandchild came home from school and informed you that the Earth is billions of years old, and all the animals in the world came about through evolution over millions of years? How would you respond if he or she announced that dinosaurs became extinct at least 60 million years before humans ever existed?

Most parents simply do not have the time to spend hours upon hours researching the countless questions their children ask while in their younger years. Allow me to encourage you to consider purchasing *Discovery* magazine for your family. Every month, this magazine teaches thousands of young people the truth about God's Word and God's world. The editors of this magazine are dedicated to teaching the facts about the Bible and science, while at the same time exposing the many errors children are being fed in the classroom. Please consider ordering this colorful, beautifully illus-

trated, eight-page monthly magazine for your children, grandchildren, nieces, or nephews.

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Dave Miller



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